



The Human City Displayed at Researchers' Night Festival 2016 in Estonia

Press release: 20th October 2016

The 2016 edition of the Researchers' Night Festival, the biggest science festival in the Baltics that ended on 30 September also featured the project [ERC= Science²](#), funded by [the European Research Council](#) (ERC), inviting the public at large to think about the cities of the future.

"More and more people are moving to cities, which is why it is crucial for us to improve the living environments of our urban areas. The bigger the cities get, the more difficult it becomes to ensure the comfort of the lives of the people living in them," said Helin Haga, the project manager in charge of the project at [Science Centre AHHA](#), explaining the need for tackling the issue of finding the way to design more human cities.

The activities carried out as part of the [Human City](#) theme of the ERC= Science² project made up a substantial part of the Researchers' Night Festival 2016 programme and, according to Haga, there was a strong link between the themes of this year's festival and that of the project. This year, the festival focused on the connection between science and fiction and, according to Haga, the researchers who do their work under the Human City theme also often use such innovative technology in their research that could, by some audiences, be classified as fictional.

The project ERC= Science² presented the high end research done in Europe with the funding of ERC for an entire week between 26 and 30 September 2016 at the Lõunakeskus shopping centre in Tartu, Estonia. As part of the programme, the visitors were invited to explore the Science Squared demo stand and participate in hands-on workshops where, with the help of technology, they could go on adventures on roller coasters or in the outer space.

In the workshops, the participants were able to make their own DIY virtual reality glasses, LED lanterns, 3D glasses and hologram projectors and, while doing so, hear about how such technologies feed into the research done by ERC grantees.

According to Haga, all it took was a smart phone to turn the DIY virtual reality glasses into a flight simulator, space ship or rollercoaster ride. The hologram creators, in turn, could transform their smartphones into hologram projectors. The workshops offered for 5 days yielded over 900 participants.

In the demo stand, everyone interested were able to watch videos about ERC grantees working under the Human City and get acquainted with their research but also entertain themselves with topical cartoons. In addition, the stand provided information about the ERC and its funding opportunities in general.

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 672302)



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission
Supporting top researchers
from anywhere in the world

In addition, to the workshops and demo stand, AHHA also invited an Estonian ERC grantee, professor Ülo Niinemets to speak about his work on 28 September 2016. The professor's science café took place in the Apollo bookshop inside the Lõunakeskus shopping centre and led to inspiring conversations between the researcher and the audience.

"The Science² programme was aimed at children and adults alike – while the children were mostly interested in the workshops, the adults showed great interest in the demo stand and the science café. All of the activities provided attracted around 1000 participants in total," Haga added.

In order to achieve its goals, ERC has engaged several institutions throughout Europe to the ScienceSquared project, including science centres and museums and research institutions. The activities of the science centres and museums are coordinated by [ECSITE](#), the European Network of Science Centres and Museums, while the project is coordinated by [Science I Business](#).

To find out more about the ERC = Science² campaign, featured ERC-funded research and the project multimedia content, please visit www.sciencesquared.eu.

To get the latest news and updates follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Scisq and like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ScienceSquaredbyERC>.

For press queries, please contact: Mr. Shane McCollam at shane.mccollam@sciencebusiness.net

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 672302)



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission
**Supporting top researchers
from anywhere in the world**